



Where in the world...are Craig & Di?

Everyone is familiar with Ellis Island..the tiny island in New York Harbor where immigrants to the United States first arrived. You may be less familiar with Pier 21 in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the comparable immigration point in Eastern Canada. Between 1928 and 1971, over one million immigrants arrived at Pier 21, bound for destinations throughout Canada and even parts of the US.

These immigrants arrived in Halifax for many reasons, including seeking refuge from a bad situation elsewhere. That is our situation. We have arrived, unexpectedly, for a two-day stay in Halifax (instead of St. John's, Newfoundland)...seeking refuge from Hurricane Erin...a large storm blasting up the Eastern seaboard. Just like those original immigrants...we're glad to be here.

Ironically, our ship is docked at Pier 20, immediately next door to the famous Pier 21...now renovated and serving as the Canadian Museum of Immigration.

We were last in Halifax 12 year ago, so our memories have faded. Also, because we were not scheduled to be here we have done little pre-planning and haven't arranged any tours. Therefore we decided to approach this like a first visit and to fall back on two of our always successful techniques for visiting a new city. The first is to visit the public library. They are always interesting architecturally and can give you a great sense of the community. They also always have lots of resources and maps...and great restrooms...always important for travelers. So one of our first stops was a visit to the Halifax Public Library...the new one...across the street from the "old" one. The library is a set of glass boxes...intended to look like a stack of books. Walking in the front doors is spectacular with lots



Historic Pier 21...Canada's "Ellis Island"

of angles and interesting spaces. Unlike most libraries, it was noisy and busy (in a good way) with lots happening...people chatting, drinking coffee (they have two cafes) or eating their lunch. This library was the hub of the community with kids at dozens of computer monitors or curled up in several “living rooms” reading or working on art projects. The vibe was fantastic and no one was bothered at all by our photography.

Our other tip for exploring a new city is to take a small group walking “foodie tour”. (Our favorites to date have been in Paris and Naples) We booked one at the last minute and 10 of us had a great guide who between food stops told us the history of Halifax. We stopped for seafood chowder, then a stop for a donair (a Canadian gyro-like sandwich with a unique sweetish peppery sauce), then on to an oyster tasting (with 12 varieties of oysters from Nova Scotia, PEI and New Brunswick.), then a lobster roll (hot or cold) and finally famous “Cows” ice cream from Prince Edward Island. We learned a lot about the city and still had time to visit the famous old cemetery (Di will tell you that is one of her favorite things to do in a city), their “jelly bean” colorful row houses and the Citadel...the old fort at the highest point of the city...still guarded by kilted soldiers...this area originally settled by Scottish. This was a great walking city and so we got in some great mileage just exploring. It was a great two day visit and the weather was perfect...unlike their winters where it is often well below zero for months.

Back on board the Zuiderdam, our other “life” continued with many highlights over the last few days. We had an opportunity to attend an Independence Day celebration and flag raising for the Indonesian crew. It was so professional and filled with passion...and demonstrated their love for their country. It is ironic that Indonesia gained its independence in 1945...from the Dutch (we’re on a Holland America Line ship). The captain in his remarks repeated the same apologies that King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands had made recently about their regrets from those years of colonization. We were also invited to dinner to help celebrate the wedding anniversary of crew friends (Chief Engineer Bart and his wife Darling) and also a late night secret party to celebrate the impending retirement of beloved Hotel Manager Henk and his wife Christel. There is a sadness in the air knowing they will no longer be our leaders. Henk (also a Porsche guy) also helped us configure our new Porsche on-line one afternoon.

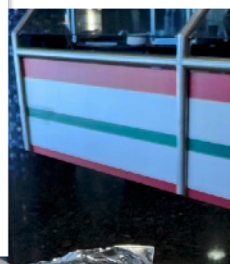
The adventure continues...as we head to Boston...



August 22, 2025



"Jelly Bean" houses in Halifax



A donair...on the walking foodie tour

With Henk...helping configure a new Porsche...and celebrating retirement
after hours with Christel & friends.

August 22, 2025



Celebrating Indonesia Independence Day

A quick photo during lunch yesterday...
my favorite traveling buddy...